

# REGIONAL SERVICES CENTERS

**PROGRAM:**

Regional Representation and Community Assistance

**PROGRAM ELEMENT:**

Community Assistance

**PROGRAM MISSION:**

To respond to citizen requests for information and direct services in a timely, courteous, accurate, and efficient manner

**COMMUNITY OUTCOMES SUPPORTED:**

- Responsive government
- Informed citizens

**PROGRAM MEASURES**

	FY02 ACTUAL	FY03 ACTUAL	FY04 ACTUAL	FY05 BUDGET	FY05 ACTUAL	FY06 APPROVED
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**Outcomes/Results:**

Percentage of requestors reporting satisfactory resolution

of their:

Request for information <sup>a</sup>	80.0	86.4	87.4	80	86	82
Request for service <sup>b</sup>	88.6	86.8	93.8	95	91	93

**Service Quality:**

 Percentage of information requests that were:<sup>c</sup>

Completed accurately	91.8	95.8	92.2	91	92	93
Answered thoroughly	74.3	90.4	85.2	74	73	82

 Percentage of requests for service that were:<sup>d</sup>

Completed promptly	97.5	84.6	97.2	90	96	89
Handled courteously	74.3	89.8	89.2	93	94	92

**Efficiency:**

Requests for service processed per workyear	15,663	14,434	15,575	13,653	14,256	15,475
Cost per information or service request processed (\$)	3.02	3.30	3.59	3.63	4.32	3.79

**Workload/Outputs:**

Information and service requests processed:

Telephone requests <sup>e</sup>	44,824	47,727	63,700	53,539	62,784	59,213
In-person requests <sup>e</sup>	83,928	77,853	98,280	72,073	79,776	89,125

**Inputs:**

Expenditures (\$) <sup>f</sup>	389,045	414,658	498,325	455,426	615,576	450,388
Workyears <sup>g</sup>	8.2	8.7	10.4	9.2	10.0	8.7

**Notes:**

<sup>a</sup>E.g., telephone requests (most telephone requests involve requests for information and referral). FY04 figures are based on the results of 79 mystery shopper calls that took place over a two week period in April 2004. A "satisfactory" rating corresponds to the percentage of mystery shoppers who rated the overall service provided in response to their request for information as "good" or "very good."

<sup>b</sup>E.g. in-person requests. Most in-person requests involve a direct service (see "Explanation" below). Outcomes/results are measured by a follow-up mail survey. A "satisfactory" rating corresponds to the percentage of respondents rating the overall service provided in handling their request as "good" or "very good." The FY05 figures were compiled from a survey done in November 2004.

<sup>c</sup>Percentage of mystery shopper "test" requests for information that were rated "good" or "very good" with regard to accuracy and thoroughness. A total of 100 tests are attempted each year. In FY05, 79 test assessments were completed.

<sup>d</sup>Percentage of respondents to a written follow-up survey rating the promptness and courtesy associated with handling their request for service as "good" or "very good." In FY05, 200 surveys were mailed, and 43 were returned.

<sup>e</sup>Includes requests related to the Silver Spring Enterprise Zone and Redevelopment Initiative.

<sup>f</sup>Workyears include volunteers, interns, and positions related to the Silver Spring Enterprise Zone and Redevelopment Initiative. Expenditures include personnel costs only.

**EXPLANATION:**

Each of the County's five Regional Services Centers (located in Germantown, Silver Spring, Fairland, Wheaton, and Bethesda) provides community assistance in the form of information and referral as well as direct services. Direct services include the sale of a variety of transit fare media, parking permits, and cash keys; processing of senior citizen identification cards; acceptance of County employment applications; distribution of pamphlets, brochures, and guides; handling requests for meeting room space; and notary public services. Information and referral services are provided on a part-time basis at satellite locations in the Olney, Damascus, Poolesville, Quince Orchard, and Gaithersburg libraries.

**PROGRAM PARTNERS IN SUPPORT OF OUTCOMES:** Montgomery County Public Libraries; Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA.

**MAJOR RELATED PLANS AND GUIDELINES:** Regional Services Centers Facilities Strategic Plan (1995).

## REGIONAL SERVICES CENTERS

**PROGRAM:**

Regional Representation and Community Assistance

**PROGRAM ELEMENT:**

Regional Representation

**PROGRAM MISSION:**

To provide timely, effective liaison and assistance to Montgomery County citizens and groups by working with residents, community organizations, businesses, interest groups, citizen associations, advisory boards, public agencies, and other local organizations and groups to exchange information, assess regional issues, and facilitate the resolution of those issues

**COMMUNITY OUTCOMES SUPPORTED:**

- Improved quality of life for individuals and families
- A healthy business climate
- Informed citizens
- Responsive government

**PROGRAM MEASURES**

	FY02 ACTUAL	FY03 ACTUAL	FY04 ACTUAL	FY05 BUDGET	FY05 ACTUAL	FY06 APPROVED
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**Outcomes/Results:<sup>a</sup>**

Percentage of responding Regional Services Center (RSC) users who rated the effectiveness of the Center in dealing with regional/community issues as "good" or "excellent"	52	73	68	75	70	77
Percentage of responding RSC users who felt that the Center had been effective in making it possible for the County to hear concerns about neighborhood issues and services	91	78	93	80	92	91
Percentage of responding RSC users who rated the helpfulness of the information provided by the Center newsletter as "good" or "excellent"	87	69	72	71	70	74
Percentage of responding RSC users who rated the overall performance of the Regional Services Center as "effective"	94	80	93	82	89	89

**Service Quality:<sup>a</sup>**

Percentage of responding RSC clients "somewhat" or "very satisfied" with:						
- The accessibility of Center staff	95	73	78	75	71	73
- The helpfulness and courtesy of Center staff	90	73	77	75	71	77
Percentage of responding RSC clients "somewhat" or "very satisfied" with the amount and quality of the information provided by Center staff	88	75	76	77	76	79
Percentage of responding RSC clients who rated the timeliness with which the Center handled their issue as "good" or "excellent"	39	44	52	46	58	56

**Efficiency:**

Cost per community/regional problem addressed (\$)	NA	393	526	561	500	568
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**Workload/Outputs:<sup>b</sup>**

Requests received for help with regional or neighborhood issues/problems	NA	5,060	4,326	4,160	4,344	4,528
Work groups created to act on/resolve community issues	NA	432	510	420	600	411
Civic association/community organization/outside agency meetings attended	NA	1,632	2,073	1,680	1,740	2,348
Committees/citizen advisory board meetings staffed	NA	680	825	1,520	612	1,147

**Inputs:**

Expenditures (\$000)	2,043	1,988	2,155	2,335	2,174	2,859
Workyears <sup>c</sup>	17.6	16.4	13.9	15.1	14.3	17.0

**Notes:**

<sup>a</sup>The FY02 results were from a pilot survey conducted in November - December, 2001 by student interns from Worcester Polytechnic Institute of Worcester, Massachusetts. The survey involves a stratified random sample of 500 persons and organizations taken from the mailing lists for the centers' monthly newsletters (100 per center). For FY05, 500 surveys were mailed; 43 were returned.

<sup>b</sup>These figures are based on data collected twice a year. For FY05, the first data collection took place between July and December, 2004. The second one took place between January and June, 2005.

<sup>c</sup>These figures have been revised based on a more consistent methodology for allocating workyears between programs. The year-to-year fluctuations reflect changes in total Regional Services Center staffing levels plus re-allocations of responsibilities between this program and the community assistance program.

**EXPLANATION:**

The regional representation program of Montgomery County's five Regional Services Centers provides liaison between the County and its residents, community groups, businesses, regional Citizens' Advisory Boards, and other public agencies. The Centers serve as a direct link between the County government and its citizens - bringing the County's services closer to residents, businesses, and other local organizations. The Centers also help the County Executive to keep in touch with local issues, while making it easier for citizens, community groups, and business organizations to voice their concerns and influence legislation. Center staff provide liaison, mediation, technical assistance, and problem-solving skills to area organizations and individuals - helping to identify and assess regional problems and issues, facilitating the development of solutions, managing site selections for public facilities, and bringing community perspectives to major policy issues. The Centers communicate with local individuals and groups through monthly newsletters and a variety of other media.

**PROGRAM PARTNERS IN SUPPORT OF OUTCOMES:** Regional Citizens' Advisory Boards, civic associations and community groups, business community, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (Worcester, Massachusetts), other County departments.

**MAJOR RELATED PLANS AND GUIDELINES:** Regional Services Centers Facilities Strategic Plan (1995).